

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
LOS ANGELES REGION

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDER NO. 98-016

REQUIRING THE CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS TO CLEANUP AND ABATE  
CONDITIONS OF WATER POLLUTION CAUSED BY THE RELEASE OF  
RAW SEWAGE FROM THE UNIT W SEWER PIPELINE INTO ARROYO CONEJO

(NPDES NO. CA0056294)  
(CI No. 4917)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, finds:

1. The City of Thousand Oaks (hereinafter called the City or Discharger), discharges treated municipal and industrial wastewater from the Hill Canyon Wastewater Treatment Plant (HCWWTP) under waste discharge requirements contained in Order No. 96-044, adopted by this Regional Board on June 10, 1996. The City owns, operates and maintains over 400 miles of wastewater lines in its collection system and the HCWWTP, a publicly owned treatment works (POTW) facility, located at 9600 Santa Rosa Road, Camarillo, California. This POTW provides sewer service to about 96,000 of 112,000 residents of Thousand Oaks.
2. On February 3, 1998, HCWWTP noticed a sudden decrease in the treatment plant headworks flows. Personnel at the POTW discovered that the Unit W sewer line, one of two main sewer lines which conveys municipal and industrial waste to the HCWWTP, was leaking raw sewage into the South Fork of Arroyo Conejo. This line accounts for two thirds of the normal flow to the POTW.

City personnel notified Office of Emergency Services and the Regional Board about the sewage spill on the morning of February 3, 1998.

City personnel were not able to adequately survey the area that same day, due to the unsafe conditions created by the storm. The storm water runoff increased the stream depth and width by several feet, making it very difficult to access the sewer line.

On February 4, 1998, City personnel determined the exact location of the pipeline rupture.

Approximately 20 feet of the existing 30-inch diameter sewer pipeline was washed out, at the Arroyo Conejo crossing, spilling an estimated 6 million gallons per day of raw sewage into the South Fork of Arroyo Conejo. To date, the pipeline has not been successfully repaired. Raw sewage continues to spill into the South Fork of Arroyo Conejo.

3. A general contractor, retained by the City under emergency contracting procedures, began emergency, temporary repair work on Wednesday afternoon (February 4, 1998).
4. A large section of the Unit W pipeline had been scheduled for replacement during Fiscal Year 1995-96 and FY 1996-97 in the City's Financial Plan. Had those repairs been made, this spill may not have occurred.
5. The City has had two other major raw sewage spills along different sections of Unit W, in the past 8 past years. The spill which took place from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1989,

discharged 800,000 gallons of raw sewage into the South Fork of Arroyo Conejo. The spill which took place from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1995, discharged an estimated 12 million gallons of raw sewage into the South Fork of Arroyo Conejo.

6. The discharge of raw sewage is a violation of California Water Code Section 13385, and is contrary to the following requirements contained in Board Order No. 96-044:

Discharge Limitation I.A.1. (Page 6)

“Waste discharged shall be limited to treated municipal wastewater only, as proposed.”;

Standard Provisions general requirement A.3. (page N-1)

“The discharge shall not cause a violation of any applicable water quality standards for receiving waters adopted by the Regional Board or the State Water Resources Control Board as required by Federal Clean Water Act and regulations adopted thereunder.”; and,

Standard Provisions general provision B.5. (page N-2)

“Any discharge of wastes at any point(s) other than specifically described in this Order is prohibited, and constitutes a violation of the Order.”

7. The Regional Board adopted a revised Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties on June 13, 1994. The Basin Plan contains beneficial use and water quality objectives for the North and South Forks of Arroyo Conejo and other tributaries of Calleguas Creek, and for the Arroyo Santa Rosa ground water basin.
8. Surface water in Arroyo Conejo is beneficially used for municipal and domestic supply, groundwater recharge, freshwater replenishment, contact and noncontact recreation, warm freshwater habitat, and wildlife habitat.
9. This Order is an action taken for the protection of the environment and, as such, is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15321.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, pursuant to Water Code Section 13304, that the City of Thousand Oaks, shall comply with the following:

1. Cleanup and abate the condition of surface water pollution and threatened pollution caused by the release of raw sewage by implementing the following actions:
  - a. Complete an assessment to determine the extent of contamination originating from the sewage spill. Sample the receiving water per your *Monitoring and Reporting Program* CI # 4917, Receiving Water Monitoring Requirement V.B.2. (page T-5), for a spill or bypass event;
  - b. Initiate a phased cleanup and abatement program. The cleanup of any remaining surface contamination and the abatement of impacts to downstream watershed resources shall take priority;
  - c. Conduct activities specified in Items a and b above, as necessary, according to the schedule of work shown in Attachment A, or subsequent revised time schedules submitted to, and approved by, the Executive Officer as the work proceeds;

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- d. Submit monthly progress reports detailing all activities implemented and results obtained during the previous month, as required by this Order, to this Board by the 15th day of each month commencing with March 15. These reports can be in a letter format. The discharger may make application to change the frequency of reporting for Executive Officer approval; and,
- e. Submit a final report to this Board, describing all completed activities and results, when any phase of surface water cleanup and investigation detailed in Attachment A is completed.

The investigation and cleanup program shall be directed and conducted by a registered civil engineer. The assessment of impacts to beneficial uses shall be conducted by a biologist or other scientist possessing the necessary expertise.

- 2. This Order is not intended to stop or redirect any investigation or cleanup or remediation programs ordered by this Board or any other agency.
- 3. This Order in no way limits the authority of the Board, as contained in the California Water Code, to institute additional enforcement actions or to require additional investigation and cleanup pertinent to this project. This Order may be revised by the Executive Officer as additional information on this project becomes available. Upon request by the City, and for good cause shown, the Executive Officer may delete or extend the date of compliance for any action required of the City, under this Order.
- 4. The Executive Officer is authorized to take appropriate action, pursuant to Sections 13268 and 13350 of the Water Code against the City, for any noncompliance with this Order including assessment of penalties in the amount of up to \$5,000.00 per day for each day on which any technical data requested by this Cleanup and Abatement Order is not submitted.
- 5. If the City of Thousand Oaks fails to comply with any provisions of this Order, the Executive Officer is authorized to request the Attorney General to take the appropriate action against the discharger, including injunction and civil monetary remedies, pursuant to appropriate California Water Code sections, including, but not limited to Sections 13304, 13350, 13385, and 13386.

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_  
DENNIS A. DICKERSON  
Executive Officer

Dated: February 9, 1998

/AVCA